

VLR-6/19/73 NRHP-7/26/73

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| STATE: | Virginia |
| COUNTY: | Harrisonburg (in city) |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY DATE | 7/26/73 |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1. NAME | | | |
| COMMON: | | | |
| Thomas Harrison House | | | |
| AND/OR HISTORIC: | | | |
| 2. LOCATION | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | | |
| 30 West Bruce Street | | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | | CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: | |
| Harrisonburg | | Seventh: J. Kenneth Robinson | |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| Virginia | 51 | (in city) | 660 |
| 3. CLASSIFICATION | | | |
| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____ | | | |
| 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY | | | |
| OWNER'S NAME: | | | |
| Mr. John Grattan | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | | |
| 30 West Bruce Street | | | |
| OR TOWN: | STATE: | CODE | |
| Harrisonburg | Virginia | 51 | |
| 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION | | | |
| COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: | | | |
| Rockingham County Court House | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE | CODE | |
| Harrisonburg | Virginia | 51 | |
| 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS | | | |
| TITLE OF SURVEY | | | |
| Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission | | | |
| DATE SURVEY: | Federal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State | <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local |
| 1967 | | | |
| DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: | | | |
| Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | | |
| Room 1116 Ninth Street State Office Building | | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: | CODE | |
| Richmond | Virginia | 51 | |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

| | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| STATE: | Virginia |
| COUNTY: | Harrisonburg (in city) |
| ENTRY NUMBER | |
| DATE | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |

7. DESCRIPTION

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One) | | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
| | (Check One) | | | (Check One) | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Thomas Harrison House is an example of eighteenth century Shenandoah Valley vernacular architecture. The city of Harrisonburg has grown around the house and it is now used as offices. An unusual feature of the house is its gable entrance, now obscured by later construction.

The slightly rectangular dwelling is two-bays wide, one-bay deep and one-and-a-half stories high. The house originally had a full English basement, but this has been partially covered because of a raise in grade level. The foundations and walls are in coursed rubble limestone with well-defined flat arches over the windows. Apparently a two-level porch originally sheltered the east gable end and also provided passage between the first and second floors as there appears to have been no interior staircase. This porch has since disappeared and the building is now connected to a nineteenth century brick structure by means of a wide stone passage. An interior chimney with a brick stack rises off-center from the west gable. The window and door architraves are carved from solid lengths of pine. Double-hung sash in the north and south sides has six-over-six light; in the west gable end the sash is four-over-four on the lower floor and early nineteenth century two-over-two on the upper floor. An original batten door with strap hinges opens into the basement. The gable roof has a molded wooden box cornice with short returns. One gabled dormer is in the north slope and two are on the south slope.

The interior plan features two rectangular rooms on the first floor with a single room in the basement and on the second floor. The present stair is in the later connecting passage. The basement is entered by a door in the north side. Where modern panelling has not been installed, the walls are painted plaster. The first floor rooms have a molded chair rail and corner fireplaces, one of which has a distinguished vernacular mantel with a floral motif. This mantle is a replacement and was originally in the larger brick house attached to the front. The remaining mantels have simple molded shelves.

The house was built over a spring, which is accessible in the basement, although the water flows on underground to nearby Black's Run. The house also was connected by tunnel to another spring, Head Spring, on Court Square. The tunnel was closed in 1910.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian | ☐ 16th Century | ☒ 18th Century | ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century | ☐ 17th Century | ☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phil. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | osophy | <u>Local History</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas Harrison House is the oldest house in Harrisonburg, and its builder is regarded as the town's founder. Thomas Harrison owned over a thousand acres surrounding the house, and on this tract he laid out the original town. He also was instrumental in having Harrisonburg established as the county seat of Rockingham County in 1780.

Thomas Harrison was the son of Isaiah and Abigail Harrison, descending from a family of English extraction who had settled on Long Island in New York around 1688. The family later moved to Delaware before finally coming to Rockingham County, Virginia around 1738. Thomas Harrison became a major landowner in the county, eventually acquiring 2100 acres. He built the present house about 1750, and it remained in the Harrison family until 1870.

The Harrison House was the scene of the first courts held in Harrisonburg after it became the county seat. Bishop Asbury, the pioneer leader of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, often visited Harrison and conducted some of the first Methodist services held in the county in the house. In 1794 a Methodist-Episcopal conference was held in the Harrison's house.

In addition to its historical associations, the Thomas Harrison House is interesting as an example of a mid-eighteenth century rural house which early in its history became part of an urban center. As one of the Valley of Virginia's oldest examples of stone vernacular construction, the house is a rare architectural survival.

G. H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Harrison, Houston, Settlers By the Long Grey Trail.

Wayland, John, A History of Rockingham County.

Wayland, John, Stonewall Jackson's Way.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | O R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | LONGITUDE | | LATITUDE | LONGITUDE | |
| | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | |
| NW | ° ' " | ° ' " | | 38 ° 26 ' 52 " | 78 ° 52 ' 12 " | |
| NE | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |
| SE | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |
| SW | ° ' " | ° ' " | | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than ten acres.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

| | |
|--|------------|
| NAME AND TITLE: | |
| Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff | |
| ORGANIZATION | DATE |
| Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission | June, 1973 |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | |
| Room 1116 Ninth Street State Office Building | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE |
| Richmond | Virginia |
| | CODE |
| | 51 |

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Title _____

Date 6/19/73

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date 7/26/73

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

~~Morrison~~
THOMAS HARRISON
House

